

GEORGE MUIR, MARGARET
HANNAH AND CHRISTINA
HOWIE LINDSAY MUIR



George Muir, son of James and Mary Murray Muir, was born October 16, 1832, near Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland. After attending school a short time, George went to work in the coal mines, a vocation he followed most of his life. About 1847 he and his family joined the Mormon Church.

In 1853 he married Margaret Hannah, an orphan girl, born January 1, 1850, near Kilmarnock, who also had joined the Church. They had two children, Mary and Jane, before making plans to come to Utah.

They left Liverpool on March 19, 1856,

arriving at Boston May 23, 1856. Traveling by rail to Iowa City, Iowa, they stayed just long enough to prepare handcarts for the wearisome journey across the plains. They made their start on June 11, in the Scotch company headed by Daniel D. McArthur. Their two small children rode in the cart and George walked and pushed and pulled the handcart.

Near Fort Bridger, Wyoming, on September 22, 1856, Margaret gave birth to a baby boy, naming him James Mountain Muir. The others in the party moved on. One day later, George secured transportation for Margaret and the three children in an ox-drawn wagon and they were brought into Salt Lake four days behind the first handcarts to arrive.

They lived in Salt Lake until 1858. George assisted in bringing out some of the granite blocks for the Temple foundation. George then moved south to Provo, where he helped build a road up Provo Canyon to Heber. Later that year Brigham Young sent George to Sanpete County to open up a coal mine, one of the first in the state. Here he burned the first coking coal in the state. In this mining venture he had the misfortune to lose one of his eyes. He walked unassisted to Salt Lake for medical attention.

With his family, George moved to Heber in 1861 and homesteaded some land and built a log house in Heber.

Following the Mormon Church belief, he became a polygamist by marrying Christina Howie Lindsay, a widow from Scotland, in the fall of 1863, and helped rear her eight children by William Lindsay in addition to two sons, John Lindsay, born May 24, 1864, and George Lindsay, born February 16, 1867, under the polygamy covenant.

About 1867, George moved his two families to Coalville, where he went to work for the Wells-Fargo Company and opened up the Allen coal mine. He later opened up mines for the Union Pacific Railroad Co., first at Rock Springs and later at Evanston, Wyoming. He reportedly filed on a mining claim at Rock Springs, then deeded it to the Church at the request of Brigham Young, to give the Church a stronger bargaining position with the Union Pacific Railroad when they built the road through to Utah. He also opened up coal mines for the

Mormon Church in Grass Creek Canyon. George Muir undoubtedly opened up more coal mines than any other person during the period 1858-90.

In 1881, George moved his families back to Heber. A year later his wife, Margaret, died after 30 years of marriage. They had reared nine children, Mary, Jane, James M., Margaret Ann, Isabella, Elizabeth, George, Christina and Agnes.

George and Christina continued their family life together many years, taking up more land in Center Creek, and with the help of her sons, building a beautiful red rock home in Heber.

With stepsons, James and Andrew Lindsay, George Muir was successful in boring the Strawberry (Willow Creek) tunnel, through which they brought irrigation water into the Great Basin from the Colorado River watershed, an accomplishment of note for its day, as it was the first transmountain diversion of water into the Great Basin.

Christina passed away on July 25, 1906. George lived two more years and was cared for by his son, George L. Muir, and Teenie Duke, daughter of James Lindsay. He died May 24, 1908, and was buried in Heber Cemetery.

Christina Howie Lindsay Muir was a remarkable woman. Born at Craighall, Ayrshire, Scotland, July 3, 1823, she worked as a dairy maid in her early teens. She married William Lindsay in 1844, and they joined the Mormon Church in 1848, which caused her family to disown her. However, Christina and William were very active in the Church. He was killed in a coal mine on October 17, 1861. Fulfilling their plans to come to Utah, Christina brought her eight children, Robert, Andrew, William, James, Samuel, Jean, Elizabeth and Isabella, to Utah in 1862. She moved to Heber, where she worked as a seamstress, cook and midwife until her marriage to George Muir the following year.